



## *LITTLE DIFFERENT IN 1911*

Nobody had ever heard of a "convertible" back in 1911, but any auto could be converted from a breezy open job to one that was at least moderately enclosed, provided the occupants got out, hoisted the collapsible top, and then for added protection snapped leather-and-isinglass curtains along the sides. The car in the picture at bottom left is open to the sunshine and to the winds, and it won't take more than ten or fifteen minutes to enclose it. It is in Conestoga, Pa., where a concourse of streetcars on the loop in the public square is about to create a great traffic tangle.

The lure of the open road offered very little in the way of pavements when the ocean-to-ocean cavalcade went west, but it at least provided a great deal of openness. On the rolling westward plains there was of course nothing at all in the way of a pavement, and in the particular section shown above there was not even a line of telephone poles to tell a driver that he was properly on his course. Route numbers had not yet been imagined, the unfarmed prairies were unfenced, and the autos moved along like ships at sea. Remember the words "prairie schooners"?

1161



## THE GOING WAS A BIT RUGGED



Touring had its hazards back in the days before the First World War. To begin with you had to think about your tires. They picked up nails, developed slow leaks, or simply exploded, and a day in which at least one did not need to be changed was special. The tool chest contained not only a jack and tire irons but also a pump, and inflating a new inner tube—which had to be inserted in the casing after being partly inflated, and then put on the rim and pumped up to full strength—provided plenty of exercise, as the picture at the upper left clearly indicates. When the tires held up, the motorist had the road itself to think about. In the center picture, left, the principal highway across Nebraska (now U.S. 30) is blocked by a barbed wire fence, which must first be removed and then replaced; and at the bottom a fallen tree in eastern Pennsylvania has to be cleared. But taking one thing with another, the roads were usually more or less passable until the rains came, after which it was every motorist for himself. A road that has never even had a top dressing of gravel can get extremely gummy after a good summer shower, and in their progress across Colorado the 1911 tourists got acquainted with this fact. A car whose drive wheels are hub-deep in mud is more or less helpless, and a strong rope plus lots of manpower, aided if possible by mechanical force, had to be used. Looking at the eloquent pictures at the right, one can understand why the motorist in those days wore old clothes and put a raincoat or a duster on top of them.







## *ACROSS THE DIVIDE*

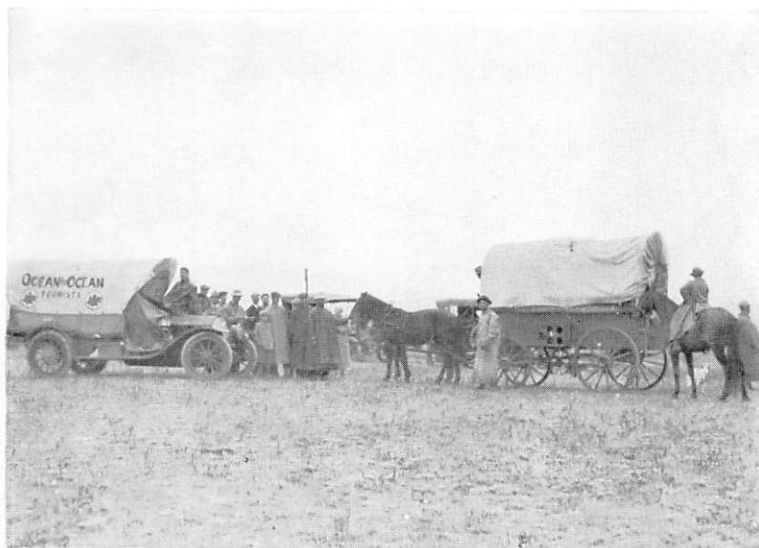
*These cross-country tourists were really eminent—or, in any case, some of them were—and the Reno, Nevada, Evening Gazette remarked that they included “eight millionaires, a countess, and thirty-three other people.” In the picture above, they were celebrating a special occasion: the crossing of the Colorado-Wyoming state line, nearly 3,000 miles from the starting point. Complete in travel-stained dusters, they lined*







## *THE PAUSES THAT REFRESHED*

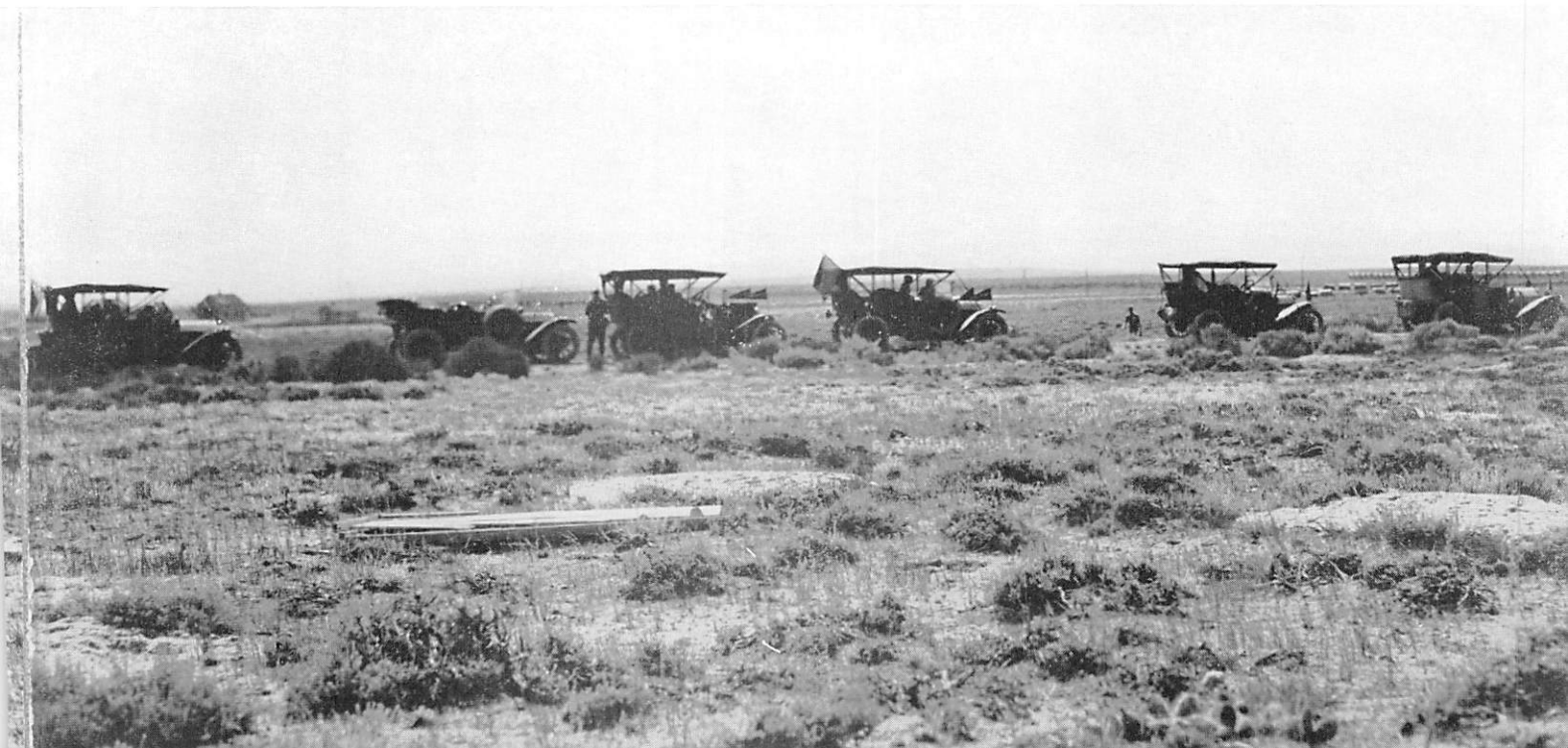


*At left, the truck which carried gasoline drums, spare parts, and tools is parked by a western roadside to confront a covered wagon of earlier vintage. It might be pointed out that in 1911 there were only 20,000 registered trucks in all the United States; as a matter of fact, the United States then contained more bicycles than automobiles, by a wide margin. Horse-drawn vehicles were far more numerous, although most of them lacked canvas tops. At right, the cavalcade is welcomed in Julesburg, Colorado—the mayor turned out, as did the town band, a group of suffragettes, and assorted citizens who wanted to see the dauntless motorists who were driving from coast to coast.*



up for the cameraman, and the American flag was held by the above-mentioned lady of title, Countess de Calatrava, New York-born widow of a Spanish nobleman; and the junior members of the expedition, including at least one genuine Boy Scout, held the line at the extreme left. Another special occasion came shortly after this one—the crossing of the Continental Divide, below, where the twelve cars lined up along

the roadside while a few of the wayfarers got out to see the tombstone of one Frank Yost, who had surveyed the line of the Divide years earlier and had expressed a wish that he might be buried on it. No doubt to the surprise of one and all, the Continental Divide looked perfectly flat and was set off by no spectacular marvels of mountain peaks, deep canyons, or other features to prove that it was a divide.





## JOURNEY'S END



Eventually they got there, although there had been novel experiences along the way. At the upper left, the party's truck negotiates an uncommonly rocky stretch of highway near Lexington, Nebraska; and in the photo below this, one of the cars plows through axle-deep blossoms near Sacramento, California. At this place the road ran along the line of a long-abandoned railway grade, where years earlier there had been a train wreck which dumped a carload of flower seeds on the right of way. The seeds fell on good ground, and for an eighth of a mile the path was in full bloom. At bottom, the motor caravan reaches the coast of the Pacific—and good roads—south of San Francisco. At the right comes journey's end: In Los Angeles, attended by a suitable concourse of interested bystanders, the cars get down to the Pacific shore and carefully put their rear wheels in the water. Ocean to ocean, Atlantic City to Los Angeles: done.





Neither rest rooms nor hotels were quite up to the standards of a later day in 1911. At the left, the motorists take advantage of a running stream for a quick wash-up before going on into Salt Lake City; and it might be pointed out that an occasional wash-up, when one rode in an open car over unpaved roads, was definitely necessary. At right, above, is the barn occupied by the men in the party during an overnight stop at the Forks Hotel, near Fort Collins, Colorado. The hotel itself, not visible in this picture, provided more or less conventional quarters for the women folk, but for the men there was nothing but a hayloft, soft and warm but not exactly modern. In the picture just below this glimpse of the Forks Barn, a special chef prepares dinner for all hands by the roadside just west of Omaha. Passing through Omaha, the tourists learned they would have to make an overnight camp with no restaurant anywhere near. Impressed no doubt by the countess and the millionaires, the proprietor of Omaha's New Henshaw Hotel loaned a chef, an assistant, and a waiter, shown in action by the roadside.

